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## COMMUNICATIONS

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*To the Editor:*

The article of Mr. William R. Price in the February number on "One Cause of Poor Results in Modern-Language Teaching" prompts me to a few words in reply. Mr. Price takes exception to a criticism of mine made several years ago, in which I pointed out that the excessive difficulty of the college-entrance examinations involved of necessity very unsatisfactory results. He offers in his turn an exhibit of ludicrous incapacity on the part of a number of teachers who plan to teach by the direct method. No one can deny that this exhibit is depressing in the extreme, but does it at all establish the point that Mr. Price is trying to make? If it proves anything, it is this: that a number of very incapable people are attempting to teach German or French by the direct method. It is clearly the business of those directly concerned to prevent such people from undertaking a task for which they are not qualified.

But beyond this, do not the very examples that Mr. Price furnishes show conclusively the character of the preliminary work on which these teachers base their claims? What Mr. Price ought to tell us is whether these people are or are not the product of the prevailing college system of modern-language training. If Mr. Price's statistics would enable him to state that all of these people were the product of college courses, carried on exclusively by the direct method, then he might claim that he had in a measure made his point. As things now stand, he has furnished a very powerful argument for the inadequacy of the methods that are prevalent in much of our college work in modern languages.

JULIUS SACHS

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*To the Editor:*

In June the question will arise, "Shall I send my daughter to boarding school in September?" The daughter in question may be very sensitive, slow in acquiring book knowledge, or she may be simply lazy. In any case her mother may feel that mingling with other people will cure these faults. There is danger that just the opposite will happen. If the girl is sensitive she may shut herself, turtle-fashion, more tightly in her shell; if she is lazy she will probably shove more responsibility on others at school than she could at home, and thus grow lazier; if she is deficient she can always beg or bribe somebody to work her algebra

or translate her Latin for her. On the other hand, if a sensitive girl were kept at home, and the home made bright and attractive for her company, in playing hostess she would gradually lose her shyness. If the mother of a lazy daughter would spend a little effort in compelling the girl to take her share, however slight, in the household duties, the daughter would soon acquire orderly habits. And if the mother of a seemingly stupid girl would develop in her a talent that lies outside of books, such as sewing or cooking, the girl would regain her self-respect and might develop capability. When will mothers realize that most of their children's faults are due to their own negligence, and, instead of putting greater burdens on the schools, look for and correct the fault in themselves?

Yours very truly, MARIA W. KILLOUGH

BETHLEHEM, PA.

*To the Editor:*

This year we tried an experiment in vocational guidance in our high school which may be of interest to other school men working on the same problem. We arranged a list of about seven of the leading business men selected on the basis of personality and successful business experience, men who could discuss subjects of law, banking, medicine, insurance, mercantile business, newspaper work, and school work. Then we called a meeting of the high-school boys and proposed a series of meetings for Friday evenings at the high-school chapel about once a month. The great majority of the boys were very much in favor of the plan. When the idea was proposed to the business men it met with an enthusiastic reception. The men took an interest in preparing these informal talks. Each followed a set outline covering the points of disposition, habits, training, preparation, experience, duties, advancement, remuneration, and opportunities for social service, taking about forty minutes for the talk and then throwing the meeting open for questions from the boys. The meetings have proved exceedingly interesting to the boys. As nearly as possible we have used a similar plan for the girls, taking up the subjects of office work, nursing, teaching, library work, etc. The scheme has been just as popular with the girls as with the boys.

This arrangement for vocational guidance seems to recommend itself to the high school for three reasons: it provides the boys with definite, reliable information regarding different occupations, it connects the school and the community more closely, and is well adapted to fit the needs and possibilities of any community.

H. T. STEEPER

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